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SHORT ESSAY

ON

THE EFFICACY OF

AN INTERNAL MEDICINE

IN THE

CURE OF STRICTURES,

AND

OTHER MORBID CONDITIONS

OF THE

URETHRA.

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AN ESSAY,

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THE symptoms and pathology of strictures of the urethra, and the treatment in ordinary use for them, are so fully explained in my Practical Treatise on Diseases of the Genito-Urinary Organs, that it would be superfluous to enlarge on them again in this essay. They who desire further information thereupon may be referred to the work above-mentioned, where it will be found

that several varieties of the complaint have been accurately described, and an attempt has been made definitely to establish the best methods of cure adapted to each specific case. By a strict attention to the practical precepts thus laid down, I feel sure that the treatment of stricture by instruments will be much simplified, the cure much accelerated, and unpleasant consequences nearly, or altogether prevented.

It must, however, be confessed, that the cure of strictures by the simple bougie, or by metallic instruments is, at best, but a tedious and disagreeable process ; and much irremediable mischief is daily com-

mitted by the use of caustic in unskilful hands, while even under the most scientific application it is far from being devoid of danger. No one can peruse the works of Sir Everard Home, on the treatment of strictures by caustic, or have attended to the admonitions of experience, without being convinced of this fact, from the profuse and alarming hæmorrhages which not unfrequently have attended the application of it.

Independently, moreover, of the above objection, there are numerous persons (and they in general are the greatest sufferers from strictures) who have so much irritability of constitution, that the introduction of the com-

mon bougie excites great commotion in the whole system, and the use of it cannot with safety be persevered in, while the application of caustic is, of course, out of the question. Others, again, from the nature of their avocations, as officers in the army or navy on service, cannot spare a sufficiency of time to undergo the course of treatment by bougies. Besides, sea-faring persons, and those whose residences are far removed from the seats of science, are unable to procure the assistance of practitioners, experienced in the application of instruments.

To these it becomes a matter of vital importance, and to all it must

be highly desirable to possess a medicine which will gradually effect a cure ; and which will at all times avert the sudden, and often dangerous retentions of urine to which persons having strictures are so liable when exposed to cold or irregularities in diet, without resorting to mechanical aid.

Permanent stricture is occasioned by an alteration in the structure of the urethra, most commonly the result of chronic inflammation ; to which there is generally superadded a degree of morbid sensibility and spasm.

The object we ought to have in view, in the treatment of strictures

by the common bougie, is not simply to dilate the parts mechanically, (as is too generally supposed,) but to produce absorption of the interstitial deposit, which constitutes the organic obstruction.

Now, amongst the various materials which nature and art have furnished towards the cure of diseases, some are possessed of the power of relaxing the muscular fibre, some of allaying spasm and irritation, and others of exciting the action of the absorbent vessels. These are the three grand objects which we desire to attain in the treatment of strictures, and it appeared feasible that, by a judicious combination of sub-

stances having the above several properties, the so much desired influence might be obtained from a collective form of ingredients.

If medicines, taken into the stomach, have the power to relax the fibres of a muscle in the eye, to allay spasm in a distant part of the body, or to produce the absorption of a tumour in the throat or breast, facts of daily occurrence, it seemed probable that such means would act with increased energy, when together with their constitutional influence, they were directly brought into contact with the affected surface. That the urine becomes impregnated with certain medicines, is sufficiently esta-

blished by its power of partially dissolving calculi in the bladder, and by the peculiar odour communicated to it by asparagus, or by copaiva, and other terebinthinate drugs.

Reflecting frequently on this subject, I became more and more convinced of the practicability of forming a compound which would effect these objects ; and I have the satisfaction to say, that I have succeeded almost beyond my expectations in discovering such a medicine ; and after repeated alterations and improvements in the composition, have at length attained to such perfection as may authorise me in announcing it to the public.

The remedy is of a very innocent nature, and does not prevent the patient from following his usual avocations. The exhibition of it has been followed in *every* case with the most marked benefit. A few doses, even in the most aggravated form of disease, yield immediate relief, and being persevered in, shortly remove from the patient every distressing symptom. Whilst it produces such beneficial influence on the local affection, it, at the same time, produces a no less salutary effect on the general health.

It will be found to strengthen the stomach, improve digestion, and promote the various secretions. It

emulges the biliary ducts, and by the general stimulus which it diffuses over the vascular, the absorbent, and the nervous systems, removes irritability of habit, and depression of mind, and creates an unusual vigour of constitution.

Gentlemen, who after residing long in India, have returned to this country with their constitutions broken, and their countenances jaundiced, have been, under a course of this medicine, so much improved in their general health, and have been so remarkably altered for the better, in fact and in appearance, as to excite the astonishment of their friends and acquaintances, so that many have

been induced to resort, with like advantage, to the use of the remedy, merely from general bad habit of body, and without having any urethral affection.

Sometimes, when the stricture is of long standing, and very callous, the occasional introduction of a bougie, after some progress has been made by the remedy, and in some very rare instances, one or two slight and guarded applications of caustic, though not absolutely necessary, will yet materially assist to expedite the cure.

Where several strictures exist in the urethra, that situated nearest the bladder is generally the one which

causes all the misery, and patients experience no relief until all those anterior to it are reduced, so that the bougie can act on it; but my remedy affords more immediate benefit, because it acts upon all simultaneously.

As it is requisite to persevere in the occasional use of instruments for some length of time after the urethra has been restored to its natural diameter by their means, and to discontinue them very gradually, so is it necessary that the medicine should be continued for a considerable period after the cure is apparently perfected, and very slowly left off.

In gonorrhæa, after the inflamma-

tory symptoms have been subdued by the means I have elsewhere recommended, the powders will be found the *best* remedy for restraining the discharge, and restoring the parts to their natural state, and the *only one* for preventing the formation of strictures.

In gleet, and in irritable states of the urethra, attended with nocturnal emissions, and in debility of the parts, from whatever cause arising, the powders will be found a most effectual remedy.

In cases of stricture one of the powders must be taken three times a day, in jelly, or in some thick liquid. If the disease be of recent origin,

and the urethra has not been destroyed, or much injured by caustic, the medicine seldom or never fails to remove it in a few weeks ; and in the severest cases, and of longest standing it generally affords considerable relief in a short period, and by being continued for a few months removes all distressing symptoms.

Previously to entering on a course of the powders, it will be prudent to take one or more doses of gently aperient medicine, particularly if the stomach be disordered, or the tongue coated, and during the use of them the patient should abstain from spices, highly seasoned dishes, salt meats, and from drinking much wine

and spirituous liquors. The bowels should be kept regular.

Three powders a day are to be stated as the medium quantity that may be requisite, though some persons can bear a greater number, and others not so many. Should any unpleasant sensations be felt about the head, the number of doses should be immediately diminished, whatever that may be.

In retention of urine, one of the powders may be taken every half hour, until relief be obtained, and their operation may be assisted by warm local fomentations, or the semicupium if it can be procured.

In the second stage of gonorrhæa,

in gleet, and other chronic affections of the membrane of the urethra, the powders must be taken as above directed in cases of stricture.

I here subjoin a few condensed cases illustrative of the efficacy of the powders under various conditions of disease.

CASE I.

A gentleman residing in Coventry about three years ago consulted me by letter, respecting a stricture which had distressed him much for many years, obliging him to rise several

times every night to empty the bladder. He had four packets of the powders sent. At the end of two months he informed me that he had lost every unpleasant symptom, and requested a further supply of the medicine; since which time I have not heard from him.

CASE II.

Mr. J., of Dover, about the same period applied to me, also by letter, for a very irritable stricture, with gleety discharge, which gave him great uneasiness, and materially in-

jured his health by disturbing his repose, and compelling him to pass his water six or seven times every night. He was also cured by the powders.

I had not an opportunity of examining the urethra in the above cases, but the latter gentleman having occasion to visit London on business about a year afterwards, called upon me to thank me for his restoration to health and comfort, and stated that he considered the powders invaluable. He informed me that before taking them, he could not have passed a knitting needle through the stricture, but was then able to introduce a bougie of size

No. 8, with the greatest facility. He told me also, that he had recommended the remedy to several friends at Dover, and to one at Calais who had been for many years a martyr to strictures, and that they had all experienced the same happy results.

CASE III.

Mr. S., aged 50 years, after having experienced several attacks of gonorrhæa in early life, about the age of thirty first discovered a difficulty in voiding his urine, and from some imprudence had a retention.

A stricture being detected, for some years he underwent treatment by bougies, both simple and caustic, with some benefit. Of late the disease had returned, and his symptoms had become much aggravated. He now made water with the greatest difficulty, and was subject to frequent retentions from slight causes. His calls to urine were almost incessant ; it was passed in very small quantity, and drop by drop, with violent straining and spasmodic contractions of the muscles. These continual and severe efforts at micturition frequently caused him to evacuate the rectum. His urine was muco-purulent, and emitted a very offensive

odour. He was much emaciated, and had nearly lost his natural rest at night.

A bougie was arrested at six and a half inches, and the smallest sized one could not be carried further in consequence of the injury that had been done to the canal by caustic, and the formation of false passages.

In three weeks after commencing the powders, he was materially relieved, the calls to make water were less frequent, and voidance was accomplished with greater ease, the urine had become more clear, and he obtained a few hours rest at night. By persevering for a few months he

was so far recovered as to have occasion to rise only twice or thrice during the night, his urine had a natural appearance, he had regained his flesh, and was highly pleased at his improved condition. I was, however, never able to introduce an instrument into the bladder for the reasons above-stated.

CASE IV.

A gentleman, who had laboured under a neglected gonorrhæa for twelve months, experienced a straightening, attended with pain, towards

the root of the penis, and on making water a sensation of pricking and soreness in the passage. The stream of urine also became smaller and spiral, and it was voided with more difficulty. Occasionally, after irregularities of diet, or exposure to cold and wet, he was subject to retentions; these being relieved, he took no precautions to have the state of the urethra rectified. Some time after he married, but this only tended to increase his symptoms, and he had constant pain in the lumbar region. The patient, after a time, perceived that the act of coition became completed sooner than usual, and frequently attended by pain. This in-

creased sensibility of the organ became so much augmented that the emission took place at the moment of introduction of the penis. His venereal appetite diminished, and he seldom had conjugal intercourse, as he experienced the next day pain in the groins, weakness of the limbs, and general lassitude. At length, his sexual desire ceased, and he lost the power of erection. The semen was sometimes evacuated when at stool. He was reduced to the utmost state of gloominess and despondency of mind, which constantly dwelt upon his complaints. His urine had a fetid ammoniacal odour, and was passed, drop by drop, and

deposited a considerable quantity of muco-purulent matter, which adhered firmly to the bottom of the chamber vessel.

There were several strictures which admitted with great difficulty a cat-gut bougie.

This gentleman soon experienced the good effects of the powders, aided by such occasional treatment as from time to time the state of his constitution and symptoms indicated. His appetite returned, he gradually acquired flesh and strength, his urine became clear, his desire and ability for conjugal intercourse returned, the act was accomplished in a natural manner, and in about eight months

he was restored to a perfectly healthy state, both of mind and body.

CASE V.

A gentleman in Wales, about 30 years of age, in requesting my advice, transmitted the following history of his complaint.

About thirteen months ago he had contracted a gonorrhæa, the symptoms of which were not violent, and he neglected it for nearly three months, when he had recourse to an astringent injection. For three or four months afterwards he was annoyed

by a slight discharge and uneasiness along the perinæum, and when on horseback, by a sensation of titillation of the whole of the urethra, such as is usually felt previous to an erection, which, however, did not ensue, but the parts remained in a flaccid and particularly relaxed state, and seemed destitute of sensation. Soon after the bladder took on diseased action, the urine became flocculent, the debility of the external parts increased, so that an erection never took place except at night, when it was rather painful. The extremity of the urethra appeared very red, and frequent herpetic eruptions broke out on the prepuce. His health was very precarious, the tongue generally

furred, and feeling as if scalded, and his temper had been rendered very irritable.

He was, at this period, recommended to try a bougie, with a view of giving tone to the relaxed parts, but the use of it excited violent constitutional disturbance, and brought on spasms in the muscles of the back, legs, and particularly in those of the perinæum and anus. There was also profuse discharge from the urethra, which lasted four or five weeks. After this, he discontinued all treatment, believing his case to be hopeless.

Ten days after commencing the powders he wrote as follows : “There is much debility of the parts by day---

they do not seem to be under the influence of impressions of the mind as usual, and the erections are only partial, and of short continuance---there is no diminution in the size of the stream of urine---no uneasiness in the perinæum, nor discharge from the urethra. Nocturnal emissions formerly took place frequently, but now, be the dream ever so exciting, they do not occur. Have had occasional sexual intercourse, but the parts are very different from their former state. The semen is small in quantity, it scarcely stains the linen, and leaves no starch-like feel on it."

In another fortnight I had the following favourable report : "The parts are in a much more comfortable state

of feeling ; the irritability of the bladder has been quieted, not requiring to be evacuated more than three times in the twenty-four hours. The urine much less flocculent, still there is the same quantity of mucus, but it is more transparent. The relaxation of the parts is not so great. A large sized bougie went readily into the bladder ; it caused no uneasiness, except in passing through the membranous portion of the canal, when a peculiar smarting pain was felt, which compelled an immediate withdrawal. The only unhealthy symptom at this time, is a want of energy from impressions on the mind. When an erection takes place, which is every morning, there is now no pain

or tenderness along the urethra, but it soon subsides, and does not again take place until the following morning, unless through manipulation. I do not find any herpetic eruptions on the prepuce which heretofore so much troubled me." A few weeks afterwards it was a great satisfaction to hear from this gentleman, that the parts had regained their natural tone, and that he was quite well.

CASE VI.

An officer of rank in the Company's service, who had gone in early life to the East Indies, returned about seventeen years ago for the purpose of being cured of strictures, from

which he had long suffered. He placed himself under the care of a gentleman who then enjoyed a high reputation for skill in the treatment of urethral diseases. He was subjected to the application of caustic, which brought on frequent paroxysms resembling ague and fever, and his general health suffered so materially that the treatment was twice suspended, that he might resort to the country to recruit. By patience and perseverance, however, and after upwards of seventy applications of the caustic, a wider passage was at length established to the bladder. After this his general health became tolerably re-established, and he returned to India. He soon neglected

the precaution of occasionally passing a bougie ; and his complaint gradually returned. He came back to this country on the expiration of his period of service in much the same state, as regarded the urethra, as formerly, but to which was now superadded, a constitution shattered by the climate, and a countenance denoting much hepatic disease.

Remembering the sufferings he endured in his former treatment by caustic, he had determined to bear with fortitude his present condition rather than to have again recourse to that agent.

Having heard of my method of treatment, he became anxious to try the efficacy of the remedy. Under

its influence, not only did he obtain speedy mitigation of his urethral symptoms, but so marked a change for the better was produced in his complexion and general aspect as to excite the notice, and gratify the anxieties of his friends.

It is unnecessary to multiply cases of success which has been so uniform, under symptoms varying but little in character from the preceding. They have all yielded in various periods of time to perseverance in the use of the Powders, and strict attention to the directions given.

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